CHURCH NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

Edited by
THE NORTHERN ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE
Sigtuna, Sweden

Director: Dr. HARRY JOHANSSON, Sigtuna, Sweden
Editor: Rev. JOHS. LANGHOFF, Øster Egesborg per Mern, Denmark

No. 49 June 30th, 1959.

Common Northern Metrical Hymn-Book with 100 Tunes.

The Northern Choral Book Committee, set up at a Northern musicians' meeting at Uppsala in 1954, has now completed its work and at a committee meeting in Oslo decided to publish a common Northern metrical hymn-book containing 100 hymn tunes.

The reason for this is the fact that the Northern countries have 100 hymn tunes in common, but that practically all of them in the course of time have been elaborated in different ways in the various countries which may cause some embarrassment at joint Northern church services and in other cases of religious co-operation in the Northern countries. Consequently, the committee has worked out the tunes in such a way that they may be used in all the countries and may be included in future new editions of choral books.

The publication of the common metrical hymn-book may be expected this year already.

Increasing Study of Religious Subjects in the Northern countries.

It appears from reports presented last month at a conference for study group leaders from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in Helsinki (Helsingfors) that the activities of religious study circles are increasing in the Northern countries. This kind of study play an important part especially in Sweden where no less than 10 000 study circles have been at work last winter. Among other things, the establishment of study circles on stewardship, evangelization, youth welfare, etc. for members of parochial councils have been greatly appreciated, and these study circles have contributed to emphasize the responsibility of the parochial council not only for economic matters, but also for the life of the congregations on the whole. In Norway there are 1 200 registered church study groups. Here the establishment of study circles among certain categories of hospital patients is being planned at the moment.

Northern Sunday School Conference in Stavanger.

The 15th Northern Sunday School Conference will take place in Stavanger (Norway) from August 6th - 9th. Among other things, the question about what the Sunday school is able to give the children of our time and the evangelization among different age groups will be discussed. The Secretary General of the World Council of Christian Education, Mr. Nelson Chappel, will attend the conference.

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Northern Conference for Boy Scout Leaders in Stockholm.

Last month 28 boy scout leaders from the 5 Northern countries met in Stockholm. They represented the Christian as well the ordinary boy scout organizations. Among the subjects discussed was "What Do the Churches Do for the Boy Scout Corps in Scandinavia?". The conference was informed that an amalgamation of the present 5 boy scout organizations in Sweden was about to take place and that a similar amalgamation of the girl guide organizations was planned.

Northern Conference for YMCA and YWCA.

The presidents and secretaries of the YMCA and YWCA associations in the Northern capitals have met for a conference in Helsinki (Helsingfors) in order to discuss common matters. One of the main themes at the meeting which was led by Dean A. Palmgren, was "How Can One To-Day Bring the Truths of Christianity to the Youth of Our Time?". The members of the conference were agreed that the Christian approach should be the dominant factor in the work of the associations.

Fruitful Co-Operation Among the Northern Missionaries to Seamen.

The Northern Seamen's Church Council, a joint organization for the Northern Missions to Seamen, met last month for a conference in Stockholm.

The Northern missions to seamen work in close co-operation which is evident in the fact that they "distribute the ports of the world among them" so that seamen's churches and missions established by one of the countries cater for seamen from all of them. In this way it is possible in the most economical way to do a piece of church work for the seamen in ports all over the world. Often one Northern country puts up a church in a foreign port and another of the countries provides the minister for it.

DENMARK

Danish Clergyman Joins the Refugee Service of the World Council of Churches.

From July 1st, Rev. Erik Lerfeldt will take over the post as leader of the relief work of the World Council of Churches in Germany with headquarters in Stuttgart. The work consists mainly of refugee service. From 1954 - 1955 Rev. Lerfeldt, who is 45 years old, was the manager of a refugee home in Berlin.

The Bishops Want Women as Social Church Workers.

At their meeting last month the bishops in the Danish Lutheran National Church went in for the employment of women as social workers within the framework of the church. With the support of the Minister of Church Affairs, Mrs. Bodil Koch, the possibilities of the practical application of the idea will now be investigated.

Already many years ago the proposal for the establishment of such special offices for women within the church was put forward, but it could not be carried out at that time because, among other things, the adherents of women pastors were afraid that it might become an obstacle in the way of allowing women to be ordained. For a number of years now

there have been women pastors so that this fact should be of no importance. The bishops were agreed that the need was present for such a special church office for women with a social training.

The Bishops Want to Safeguard the Preparation for Confirmation.

A Committee set up by the bishops in the Danish Lutheran National Church and headed by Bishop Christian Baun, Viborg, has been in negotiations with regard to securing sufficient time for the preparation for confirmation in connection with the carrying into effect of the new Education Act, Normally the preparation takes place during the seventh year of school and the pupils are excused from school during the hours of instruction for confirmation, but since school work during the seventh year will be much intensified when the new Education Act comes into force the provision of time for preparation for confirmation may easily give rise to local difficulties if no fixed rules are laid down, and this is the reason for the action of the bishops.

The minimum time required for the instruction is estimated at two hours weekly for three months and these hours should be as early in the morning as possible so that the children may be quite fresh. The bishops have also taken the initiative in trying to solve a number of special problems in connection with the centralization of education resulting from the new Education Act.

Both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Church Affairs have received the views of the bishops with great sympathy and negotiations with the Curriculum Committee, set up by the Ministry of Education which at present is working on the general lines of practical planning of the instruction in schools, have now been entered into.

Physicians and Clergymen on Spiritual Care in Hospitals.

In the preface written by the Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Johannes Brandsen, M.D., to a report on the spiritual care in the hospitals of the Diocese of Copenhagen, drawn up by a committee of clergymen and doctors, it says that the spiritual care in the hospitals should be given such conditions and forms that it fits in naturally with the daily routine of the hospital.

The committee was set up by the Bishop of Copenhagen in 1951 and the report, covering some hundred printed pages, gives a general survey of the actual situation in connection with the spiritual service in the hospitals. There are no definite suggestions for changes, but at a number of points the committee puts forward its opinions. Thus it is noted that the spiritual care of the individual patients plays a somewhat unobtrusive part in comparison to the religious services at the hospitals. The committee feels, however, that it is equally important to give the patients a natural opportunity to speak privately with the minister. As for the services it is felt that there ought to be religious services every Sunday in the hospitals, and that the bigger hospitals ought to have a chapel where ambulatory patients might go in at any time.

According to the report the clergymen should not have access to the case sheets, but should be able to obtain the necessary information elsewhere. The fact that a few patients might not wish to take part in religious devotions in the wards should not prevent these from taking place, considering the many who would like it, the committee feels.

The report which has been received with approval by the "Kristeligt Dagblad" has caused strong protests in various other papers. A Social

emocratic organ in the province talks about "encroachment on the ights of the sick to live as they please", and the Radical paper in he capital, the "Politiken", feels that the doctor should never give he clergyman any information about the illnesses of the patients. "On eeing the minister the patients must not get the impressi on that they ave been given up by the doctors and that only a hope for the hereafter s open to them", the paper writes.

Firmer Church Organization in South Slesvig.

The Danish congregations in South Slesvig have been united in the "Danish Church in South Slesvig". This was decided at the Danish Kirchentag last month where 94 representatives of the congregations voted in favour of it and 3 against. The firmer church organization does not mean that a Danish free church side by side with the Slesvig-Holstein National Church has been established in as much as the individual inhabitant of South Slesvig may be a member of a Danish congregation without breaking with the National Church. The time has not yet been deemed right for establishing a free church proper on the same legal footing as the Slesvig-Holstein National Church, but the amalgamation of the congregations may be become an interim measure in case the desire for such a free church should gain foothold in wider circles.

The purpose of the union, as expressed in the rules, is "to further the work of the Danish Lutheran National Church along Evangelical-Lutheran lines in South Slesvig, and to look after the common interests of the congregations, particularly in connection with civil and church authorities". The final authority of the church union is the Kirchentag to which the members may send their representatives. The Kirchentag elects the Danish church council in South Slesvig.

There are 107 places of worship in South Slesvig and 25 Danish clergymen.

More Churches Introduce More Elaborate Liturgy.

Ten churches in Copenhagen have follwoed the example of the Cathedral of Copenhagen (see last number of CN) in reintroducing the old liturgic elements Kyrie Eleison, Gloria and Alleluiah as parts of the church service. The 10 churches inaugurated the extended liturgy on Whitsunday and the form employed has been worked out by the Church Music Study Group. In order that the whole congregation might take an active part in the liturgy a small folder with music and text was distributed in the churches.

Y-Men's Clubs Go in for European Co-operation.

Last month 150 representatives of the Y-Men's Clubs (an organization in support of the YMCA) in a number of European countries met for a conference in Århus. At the meeting Mr. Göran Berlin, Sweden, was elected Regional Director for the coming year, and Mr. John Qvist, Denmark, Assistant Director. The conference adopted a resolution expressing the wish to continue the work for a strengthening of the YMCA in Europe, spiritually as well as financially. "With due reverence to the characteristics of each country we wish to help to further the contact between the European countries in the largest possible number of spheres and thus do our part in bringing about the national unity which is a necessity if a greater European fellowship is to become a reality", it says in the resolution.

FINLAND

"Our People Needs a Revival of Conscience".

Occasioned by the recent exposures of serious fraudulent proceedings the Enlarged Bishops' Conference has published a statement, clearly giving its views on the problems. The statement reads as follows:

"The respect for authority inherited from former generations has been seriously shaken by people who, even in high positions, make light of their responsibilities and betray the trust of their people by abusing their office for the sake of personal profit. These events show that a real revival of consciences and a new sense of responsibility is necessary in order to preserve the integrity of our nation."

The statement emphasizes the importance of justice being done irrespective of persons and demands that the culprits resign from prominent public positions in order that the respect for authority may be preserved. Furthermore, the politicians are urgently requested to refrain from personal power-seeking and mutual accusations which are detrimental to the country and instead concentrate all their energy on the solution of great common taska.

The fundamental cause of the moral weakness the Enlarge Bishops' Conference finds in the fact that the feeling of the holiness of God has abated in the nation. At this point it is the duty of the church to be a witness to the gospel of Christ as the power which is able to change the lives of individuals as well as of nations. But at the same time it acknowledges the share of the church in the common responsibility for the trend of affairs and in this finds a solemn admonition for self-searching, penitence and revival.

Martti Simojoki Bishop of the Diocese of Helsinki (Helsingfors).

At the election for the newly established see of Helsinki (Helsingfors) Bishop Martti Simojoki, Diocese of Mikkeli (St. Michel), obtained most votes and has been appointed to the see by the President.

Successful Lutheran Orthodox Conference in Järvenpää.

From a statement to the press by various members it appoars that the Lutheran Orthodox Conference which took place in Järvenpää from May 23rd - 28th, on the initiative of the Laymen's Institute of the Church of Finland was most successful.

The theme of the Conference was "The Unity of the Church", and among the members were 3 representatives from the Soviet Union, viz. Professor Nikolai Uspenski from the Theological Academy in Leningrad, Dr. Vladimir Talysin from the Theological Academy in Moscow and Archbishop Jaan Kiivit from the Lutheran Church in Estonia. Besides these, the Head of the Ecumenical Institute, Professor H.H. Wolf, and Professor Aimo T. Nikolainen, Finland, and the Head of the Orthodox Theological College, Mr. Johannes Suhola, were also among the speakers at the meetin

From several sides it was emphasized that the Church of Finland, due to the whole situation of the country, had a special call to be bridge-builder between the present separated and isolated Churches, and in the course of the discussion a true mutual understanding was aimed at.

FINLAND

"Our People Needs a Revival of Conscience".

Occasioned by the recent exposures of espionage Presidents Procedings the Finnish-Soviet Conference has published a statement, clearly giving its views on the problems. The statement reads as follows:

"The respect for authority inherited from former generations has been seriously shaken by people who, even in high positions, make light of their responsibilities and betray the trust of their people by abusing their office for the sake of personal profit. These events show that a real revival of conscience and a new sense of responsibility is necessary in order to preserve the liberty of our nation."

The statement emphasizes the importance of justice being done irrespective of persons and demands that the authorities "from Parliament public positions in order that the respect for authority may be preserved. Furthermore, the politicians are urgently requested to refrain from personal power-seeking and mutual accusations which are detrimental to the country and instead concentrate all their energy on the solution of urgent common tasks.

The fundamental cause of the moral weakness the Finnish Church Conference finds in the fact that the feeling of the holiness of God has ebbed in the nation. At this point it is the duty of the Church to be a witness to the gospel of Christ as the power which is able to change the lives of individuals as well as of nations. But at the same time it acknowledges the share of the Church in the common responsibility for the trend of affairs and in this finds a solemn admonition for self-searching, penitence and revival.

Bishop Simojoki Bishop of the Diocese of Helsinki (Helsingfors).

At the election for the newly established see of Helsinki (Helsingfors) Bishop Aarni Simojoki, Diocese of Kuopio (St. Michael) obtained most votes and has been appointed to the see by the President.

Successful Lutheran Orthodox Conference in Jerusalem.

From a statement to the press by various members it appears that the Lutheran-Orthodox Conference which took place in Jerusalem from May 23rd - 28th, on the initiative of the Lutheran Archbishop of the Church of Finland was most successful.

The theme of the Conference was "The Unity of the Church", and among the members were 5 representatives from the Soviet Union, viz. Professor Nikolai Uspenskij from the Theological Academy in Leningrad, Dr. Vladimir Tatjasin from the Theological Academy in Moscow and Archbishop Jean Kitkit from the Lutheran Church in Estonia, besides these, the Head of the Ecumenical Institute, Professor R.H. Boll, and Professor T. Nikolaisen, Finland, and the Head of the Orthodox Theological College, Mr. Johannes Sabela, were also among the speakers at the meeting.

From several sides it was emphasized that the Church of Finland, due to the whole situation of the country, had a special call to be a bridge-builder between the persons, separated and isolated Churches, and in the course of the discussion a true mutual understanding was gained at.

At a press conference Professor Uspenski went in for extending the contact between the Churches of Finland and the Soviet Union on a wider front and, among other things, suggested an exchange of divinity students,

Lively Church Activity in the Finnish Army.

The army chaplains in the Finnish Army conduct app. 3 000 evening prayers annually and added to this come the many devotional services conducted by privates and officers. Not the least important are the prayers taking place in open air during the summer, for the very reason that they are held regularly. The strenuous daily work of the company ends with a hymn, the reading of a short passage from the Bible or a devotional book and a prayer.

Moreover, there are 600 military services annually and 800 - 900 hymn singing sessions, it appears from a report on the church service in the Army recently published by the Chaplain General, Bishop Toivo Laitinen. The religious instruction is considered a particularly important point. There has been altogether 2 000 such classes in Christianity, and 1 400 meetings of various kinds have been held for the men. During the year there have been 7[illegible] so-called "spiritual days" which were introduced during the war. The army chaplains have had 1 400 private talks about spiritual problems, paid 500 visits to patients and 600 visits in prison and have taken part in a number of other kinds of church activities.

The Chaplain General deplores the great shortage of army chaplains. At the moment many garrisons are without a permanent army chaplain.

Finnish Artist Paints Large Fresco at Caux.

At the moment the Finland-Swedish artist, Mr. Lennart Segerstråle, is working on a large fresco-painting, measuring 11 x 3,5 m, which is to adorn the Moral Rearmament Conference Centre at Caux. The subject is called "The Water of Life" and the painting is to be a gift to Dr. Frank Buchman in gratitude for what the M.R.A. has meant to the artist personally and to Finland.

NORWAY

Norwegian Missionary Council Opposed to Integration of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches.

At a meeting on April 17th, the Norwegian Missionary Council resolved to oppose the proposed integration of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, it appears from an article published by Secretary General Tormod Vågen in the Christian daily paper in Oslo "Vårt Land". Of the representatives of 21 churches and organizations belonging to the Norwegian Missionary Council only 2 or 3 were in favour of an integration and, as they did not want to bring in a motion to this effect, the resolution was carried unanimously. The resolution means that the Norwegian Missionary Council will stay away from the proposed International Missionary Commission which was to be set up at the time of integration. On the other hand the co-operation with the Northern Missionary Council will continue, according to a statement by the Secretary General to the "Vårt Land" and so far at least no affiliation to any other international missionary organization has been contemplated.

As regards the reason for the resolution the Secretary General refers to the statement drawn up by the Missionary Council two years ago when the matter was first considered. It says here:

"We admit that an integration would facilitate the solution of certain practical questions. But we consider the spiritual side of the matter the most important and feel that the proposed integration would constitute a spiritual loss."

The statement further expresses the feeling that the aversion of certain African and Asiatic churches to the words "mission" and "missionary societies" is connected with an over-estimation of the church which may lead to a serious weakening of the true character and purpose of foreign missions.

The Missionary Council further refers to the fact that during the last 50 years a bitter struggle has been fought in Norway against modernistic tendencies and the majority of the mission friends in Norway and many others all over the world consider the "very wide and theologically weak foundation of the World Council of Churches" a danger and, consequently, they must oppose it, and it is felt that the cause of foreign missions as a whole in Norway will be damaged by an integration.

It is true that the International Missionary Council admittedly does not have any firm dogmatic basis, either, but the affiliation here is considered to be of an essentially practical nature.

The statement expresses the fear that an integration might mean an unsatisfactory concentration of power which would be of greater importance than the missionary councils in the individual countries, and in this connection it says: "We consider local unity more important than an ecumenical unity, and for this reason we do not want to take the risk of breaking up the Norwegian Missionary Council on this matter."

In the interview Mr. Tormod Vågen emphasizes that Bishop Newbigin's new book "One Body, One Gospel, One Word" tends to confirm the Norwegian standpoint, in as much as the new Secretary General of the International Missionary Council in this book goes in for the "global church" in the sense that the World Council of Churches not only must be an organ for a coalition of churches, but must lead to a common church. "Many of us have been afraid of this conclusion, but our minds have always been set at rest by the assurance that such was not the case. It is most sensational that the new leader of the International Missionary Council now advocates such a programme", the Secretary General declares.

New Translation of the New Testament.

The New Testament will shortly be available in a new translation, the so-called "youth translation", in which endeavours have been made to bring the language as up-to-date and to make it as easily understood as possible. The text is set up as an ordinary book text, cross-references being placed in the margin and notes explaining difficult ideas and expressions at the bottom of the page.

The great work has been in charge of a number of scientists and was begun in 1946. At the same time work has been started on a new official translation of the whole Bible. Decision about this was taken by the Bible Society in 1956, but it will take many years yet before it is completed.

Physicians and Clergymen in Practical Co-operation.

A group of men consisting of 45 doctors and the same number of clergymen who have met regularly for the past 4 years in order to discuss common problems have started a new joint spiritual service in Kristiansand under the name of "Christian Help". One evening a weak a doctor's office will be open for consultation and the visitors will be asked whether they want to speak to the doctor or the clergyman present. Almost the same number come to see the minister as the doctor. No records are kept and not even the names of those seeking assistance are taken down.

The "Christian Help" enterprise has been advertized on posters in clergymens and doctors' offices, in the cinemas and elsewhere, and although the response has not been as great as expected it may be stated that the idea has been of help to many, the dean Sigurd Gundersen says to the daily paper "Vårt Land".

Suggestion for State-Subsidized Public Schools of the Free Churches.

The discussion in Norway about the possibility of free church teachers giving religious instruction in public schools, which until now has been possible only for members of the Lutheran National Church, is being continued with unabated zeal.

A free church lecturer in Bergen, Mr. Einar Teigland, has suggested that the purely Lutheran instruction should be limited to the last years of school and should be given only by Lutheran teachers, while the instruction in the lower classes should be of a general Christian nature and, at the same time, be open to free church teachers.

The Christian daily in Bergen "Dagen" has put it to the Free Churches that, instead of demanding access for their teachers to the religious instruction in the public schools, they should rather apply to Government for grants towards the establishment and running of private schools, so that all who might wish to do so could open a private school where the religious instruction could be in accordance with their preferences.

The President of the Joint Council of Evangelical Communities, Dr. Anker Nielsen, however, in a statement to the paper declares himself rather doubtful about the proposal. He feels that it would be a difficult task to establish such private church schools and, besides, he does not feel that this would solve the problem of free church teacher in public schools.

Contact Between the Church and Politicians and Workers.

The last number of the Norwegian Church Academy paper contains a report on an interesting conference in April at Lysebu between 45 representatives of the Church and of politics respectively. The subject was "The Church in the Modern State" and the discussion clearly showed that the two parties have points of contact with one another. "Theology cannot draw one single practical conclusion from its ethical principles without ending up in politics, and the politicians cannot make up their minds about a matter of any importance without entereing into ethical evaluations which are closely interwoven with our whole Christian tradition", it says in the report, among other things. It was agreed that the theologians, according to their special qualifications, ought to be able to contribute towards the life of society both indirectly by furthering the ethical quality in the nation and directly by helping to

think through topical questions with particular relation to the individual, the family, education, etc. The politicians, therefore, expressed the wish that such conferences should be an annual occasion for common discussions.

The Norwegian Institute on Parish Work had invited to another interesting conference in Tromsø for more than 40 representatives of most of the trade unions in Tromsø and all the local clergymen.

The President of the trade unions, Mr. Rolf Olsen, said afterwards to the Christian daily paper "Vårt Land" that the conference had given a good and sympathetic impression of the Norwegian Church and a new understanding of the actual conditions within the Church. One discovered that the distance between the two parties was not so great as one had believed before. "After this successful conference and the meeting with the clergy, there ought not to be anyting which might separate the Church and the Trade Union Movement" he said and expressed the wish for co-operation with regard to matters of, for instance, youth and education.

Missionary School in Stavanger to be Theological Faculty?

Last month the Missionary School in Stavanger celebrated its centenary. The school was opened by the Norwegian Missionary Society and has trained 230 missionaries. In 1954 it was decided that the students at the Missionary School should pass the ordinary theological degree and at the jubilee several quarters expressed the view that the school should be given the status of a theological faculty on a par with the State Faculty and the Free Faculty in Oslo.

Up to now the graduates from the Missionary School have not been entitled to officiate in the Norwegian Lutheran National Church, but were ordained by a bishop for service on the mission field. This point may also be altered, in as much as the Minister of Church Affairs has agreed to take up the matter of dispensation from the demand for a theological degree as a condition for ordination for church service in Norway on the part of the 60 now living "mission ministers" who were trained at the Missionary School prior to the decision in 1954 for the new arrangement.

At the jubilee representatives of State, Church and Christian organizations all expressed their unqualified appreciation of the scientific standard and pedagogical foresight of the school.

SWEDEN

Statement Against Nuclear Armaments.

In a statement the Board of the "Förbundet för Kristet Samhällsliv" (Fellowship of Reconciliation) dissociates itself from a possible arming of the Swedish forces with atomic weapons which is being lively discussed at the moment. The use of such weapons is described as being incompatible with a Christian conception of man. "The nuclear weapons strike indiscriminately, the civilian population and combatants suffering equally hard, and also affect future generations", it says. "The Board cannot join in the view that the use of atomic weapons is a lesser evil in comparison with the risk, primarily of an occupation of the country by a foreign power, which the absence of atomic weapons, rightly or wrongly, is considered to involve. This risk, moreover, does not disappear by arming

the defence forces with nuclear weapons. It is not possible, either, to disregard the provoking effect which the possession of such weapons may have."

"This attitude should not be taken as an expression of defeatism. Resistance to possible oppressors as well as to anything evil is in full concordance with a Christian outlook on life. Like any other Christian action, however, such resistance calls for an ethical evaluation of the means to be employed."

The Board finally declares that the statement does not attempt to pass judgment on the consciences of others but that it looks forward to the day when the Christian churches have come to greater clarity in this difficult matter.

Pupils May Be Exempted from Dancing Lessons in School.

Occasioned by a motion in the Swedish Parliament for exemption from dancing lessons in school the Supreme School Board has stated that participation in dances occurring in the course of physical training classes is to be absolutely voluntary and that pupils who for reasons of conscience want to be excused from it must not in any way be compelled to take part. Assurance was given that this would be clearly explained to the teachers.

Both the Central Board of the Swedish Lutheran Church and the Joint Committee of the Free Churches, which were consulted, have recommended that dancing should be omitted altogether from the physical training programme since the views on dancing differ as much as they do. By exempting a few pupils these may be placed in a difficult position in regard to their classmates.

The Professional Secrecy of Free Church Ministers About to be Given Statute Form.

The Swedish Committee on Legal Proceedings has submitted a report to the Minister of Justice in which it recommends an amendment extending the duty of clergymen in the Lutheran National Church not to divulge confidential matters to include also ministers, and persons on an equal footing with them, in those Free Churches which are entitled to conduct legal marriages i.e. Free Churches of a certain order and organization. The legalized duty of professional secrecy means that the persons affected by it are exempted from the duty of giving evidence in matters confided to them in the course of private conversations on spiritual matters.

This has been received with satisfaction by Free Church circles as it places the National Church and the Free Churches on an equal footing in this respect, and the weekly of the Swedish Mission Covenant Church "Svensk Veckotidning" draws attention to it as an example of how relations between the Free Churches and the State may be founded on understanding and be of a positive nature.

Survey on Church Matter in the Stockholm Press.

"Svensk Veckotidning" a weekly belonging to the Swedish Mission Covenant Church has carried out a survey on how much column space, measured in millimetres, the various Stockholm papers allotted to church matter during the month of April.

The result was that the daily paper "Dagen" belonging to the Pentecostal Mission, takes the lead with 40 185 millimetres column space, of which 21 445 millimetres concern the Free Churches and 6 690 millimetres the National Church, and then any matter concerning the Pentecostal Mission in particular is not even included in the figures. Second comes "Svenska Dagbladet" with 24 560 millimetres column space, 5 765 of which concern the Free Churches and 14 610 the Lutheran National Church. Last comes the Liberal "Dagens Nyheter" with 8 305 millimetres space, of which 1 890 millimetres deal with the Free Churches and 5 905 with the Lutheran National Church.

The placing of church matter in the various papers corresponds approximately with the amount. The best placing is found in the papers with most room for church matters.

Proposal for Omitting "the Law of God" From the Judical Oath.

The majority of Parliament has passed a bill proposed by the Swedish Minister of Justice that the words "the Law of God" be omitted in the oath which Swedish judges must swear before assuming office and that there should be easier access for those judges who might wish it to give a solemn declaration instead of taking the oath.

According to the present rules every judge must take an oath in which he promises before God Almighty and His Holy Word that he "to the best of his ability will pass just sentences, no less on the poor than on the rich, and will judge according to the Law and statutory provisions of God and Sweden."

It is the words "God and" at the end of the oath which have been omitted, and at the same time they have been omitted from the declaration which can be used instead of the oath by special permission. In the future a judge will not, as up to now, need such a special permission from the Government when he wants to replace the oath by a declaration.

Methodists Arrange Exchange for Norwegian and Swedish Ministers.

The Evangelization Council of the Swedish Methodist Church together with the Methodist Church in Norway have planned an exchange of Norwegian and Swedish ministers next year. In january 1960 some 20 Norwegian Methodist ministers will arrive in Sweden in order to officiate in congregations there and shortly afterwards an equal number of Swedish Methodist ministers will go to Norway in order to work in the Norwegian congregations.

Within the boundaries of Sweden endeavours are made to strengthen the fellowship by widening the connection between the Methodist congregations, two and two, in different parts of the country. The various committees exchange information, the ministers help each other with advice and the lay leaders keep in touch with one another.

News in Brief:

- One of the prominent figures in Swedish foreign missions, Mission Director Arvid Bäfverfeldt of the Board of Mission of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, has died, 62 years of age.

- The Swedish Bishops' Conference has set up a Training Board which is to organize the training of youth leaders and women theo-

logians for non-pastoral service in the congregations.

- On May 6th the members of the Swedish Baptist Church donated the day's pay to foreign missions under the slogan "To-day we work for the mission".

- In the Cathedral of Gothenburg on May 15th, Bishop Bo Giertz ordained 15 divinity graduates for service in the Diocese. It is supposed to be the largest number of candidates ordained at one time.

- From July 1st, the Cathedral Chapters may give laymen the permission to read the lessons from the Epistles and the Gospels at morning services in church if the parochial council and the vicar agree to it.

- After Dr. Erik Rudén, who has been appointed the Secretary for Europe of the Baptist World Alliance, Rev. Simon Öberg has been elected to be the leader of the Baptist Church in Sweden.

- The Baptist Örebro Mission has elected Rev. Linné Eriksson as the leader of the Mission after Rev. John Magnusson who has retired on a pension.

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- On May 6th the members of the Swedish Baptist Church donated the day's pay to foreign missions under the slogan "To-day we work for the mission".

- In the Cathedral of Gothenburg on May 15th, Bishop Bo Giertz ordained 15 divinity graduates for service in the Diocese. It is supposed to be the largest number of candidates ordained at one time.

- From July 1st, the Cathedral Chapters may give laymen the permission to read the lessons from the epistles and the Gospels at morning services in church if the parochial council and the vicar agree to it.

- After Dr. Erik Ruden, who has been appointed the Secretary for Europe of the Baptist World Alliance, Rev. Simon Oberg has been elected to be the leader of the Baptist Church in Sweden.

- The Baptist Orebro Mission has elected Rev. Linnéa Eriksson as the leader of the Mission after Rev. Johan Magnusson who has retired on a pension.